

Local 500. For over 30 years he served the union as representative, business manager, and business agent. Funds were raised under his stewardship to build a hall which now bears his name in thanks from his union brothers and sisters.

In 1974, Bill was persuaded to run for Toledo City Council and won. In 1983, having been the highest vote-getter, he was elected by his council colleagues as Vice Mayor. With his 1985 election as county recorder, Bill became the first African-American to hold a county office. He was appointed to the Board of Lucas County Commissioners in 1990—again making history as the first African-American County Commissioner. For many years, he was the only African-American serving on a board of county commissioners among Ohio's 88 counties. Commissioner Copeland has handily won reelection to three successive terms. He diligently pursued many major projects including new home ownership and housing rehabilitation initiatives, a regional water study, new ballpark, juvenile justice center, and the establishment of the Corporation for Effective Government to name but a few.

An integral member of our community, Bill Copeland has devoted himself to public service while actively participating in numerous organizations. While an elected official, Bill worked with the Toledo Zoological Society, Kidney Foundation, Indiana Avenue Missionary Baptist Church, Lucas County Democratic Executive Committee, YMCA, NAACP, Labor-Management Citizens Committee, AFL-CIO, Frederick Douglass Community Center, American Heart Association, Old Newsboys, COMPASS, Toledo Jazz Society, Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, and Toledo Civic Breakfast Club. It was often said and very true, that Bill Copeland was everywhere.

Though he will receive dozens of accolades upon his retirement, I believe a statement made by Toledo Blade associate editor Rose Russell sums up Bill Copeland best: "With so much power at his fingertips for more than two decades, he will go down in Toledo history as a political stalwart who hasn't found it necessary to boast, be arrogant, or snub anyone. He merely has gone his way and worked for the people who elected him."

Humbly, quietly, with grace, honor, kindness and dignity always, Bill Copeland went about the job he was elected to do. Lucas County government will miss his dignified presence and thoughtful governance. Politically, Bill spurred people to get out and vote, giving people in the central city the inspiration to change their lives through their power at the polls. These skills are his true legacy, and I join with the chorus from our community in a heartfelt "Thank You."

VACCINE INGREDIENT PROVISIONS IN THE HOMELAND SECURITY ACT OF 2002

HON. PETE SESSIONS

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2003

Mr. SESSIONS. Mr. Speaker, in the Homeland Security Act of 2002, Congress clarified that all injuries allegedly related to an ingredient in a vaccine should be heard under the quick and inexpensive, no fault Vaccine Injury

Compensation Program established in 1986. Though this was a simple clarification of existing law, some people cried foul. They claimed these provisions were inserted into the bill as a favor to pharmaceutical companies and that they would somehow take away the rights of unfortunate people who have experienced an injury. In fact, it did no such thing.

The vaccine ingredient provisions in the Homeland Security Act reaffirmed Congressional intent of the Vaccine Program's jurisdiction over all claims of vaccine related injuries, and that preservatives contained in vaccines were not subject to some special exception to the program. It did not change the state of the law, but ensured that those experiencing injuries from vaccine ingredients were not given false hope or having their time wasted having their lawsuit dismissed by the court for not going through the Vaccine Program.

The controversy surrounding these provisions is over the process by which they were adopted, not the language itself. Their repeal would not change the law in any way; as courts have correctly decided, injuries allegedly resulting from ingredients in vaccines fall under the Vaccine Program. Furthermore, the lack of these provisions may add uncertainty in the vaccine market and higher insurance rates for vaccine manufacturers something that our nation attempted to avoid in 1986 and may be even more important in today's environment. Nevertheless, repealing the provisions will remove the cloud cast over their benefit. If this language is repealed, Congress should reintroduce the provisions in another separate measure so that we may have more debate on the actual language and the public can be assured of the need for this clarification of the law.

THE EDUCATION, ACHIEVEMENT AND OPPORTUNITY ACT

HON. CHRISTOPHER H. SMITH

OF NEW JERSEY

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, January 29, 2003

Mr. SMITH of New Jersey. Mr. Speaker, as you may know, this week marks the 29th Anniversary of National Catholic Schools Week, a week dedicated to honor the achievements and successes of the more than 2.6 million children enrolled in the 8,114 Catholic Schools throughout our country. Today is National Catholic Schools Appreciation day.

It is fitting then that today I introduce legislation designed to ensure the Federal Government appropriately assists parents with the financial burdens associated with their child's education. My legislation, the Education, Achievement, and Opportunity Act will provide refundable tuition tax credits for the educational expenses incurred by parents for elementary and secondary school. The legislation would provide parents sending their child to an elementary school with up to \$2,500 in tax relief, while parents with children in a Catholic or parochial high school could claim up to \$3,500 in assistance.

The tax relief contained in my proposal can be utilized by parents to pay for a variety of educational expenses that are frequently incurred on behalf of their children. Most significantly the tax credit is designed to help with the cost of tuition. But, beyond this, the tax

credits can be used to help meet the costs of other educational needs: (1) computers, educational software, and books required for courses of instruction; (2) academic tutoring; (3) special needs services for qualifying children with disabilities (within the meaning of the Americans With Disabilities Act); (4) fees for transportation services to and from a private school, if the transportation is provided by the school and the school charges a fee for the transportation; and (5) academic testing services.

Parents know the interests and needs of their children better than anyone else. If we are truly going to ensure that "no child is left behind," in our national education agenda, then we must make sure our children have every tool at their disposal to academically succeed.

The wealthy in America already have the choice to send their child to the school that best suits them. But middle and working class families often do not. Between tuition costs and out-of-pocket expenses like tutoring, computers, and transportation, the costs can add up and pose an enormous obstacle to the child's lifetime learning opportunities.

In my own district in New Jersey, a parent who feels a Catholic elementary school is best suited for their child, will pay somewhere between \$1,840 and \$2,566 in tuition costs per child, per year. If you want to send your child to a parochial high school in the central New Jersey area, a parent is looking at an average tuition bill of \$5,571 per student, per year. In other areas of the country, the costs are very similar.

Without federal support, many parents struggle—and in some cases forgo—a Catholic school education, or any education in a spiritual setting, because the costs are so high. Learning in a religious setting is not for every one, and America's public school system is critical to providing educational opportunities for all. We must continue to vigorously support our public schools at both the federal and local levels. At the same time, however, we should support those who seek the benefits of Catholic school and choose a religious setting as the best, educational environment for their children.

In effect, parents of Catholic school children pay twice—they pay their fair share of taxes necessary to support the public school system, and they pay tuition at the school their children actually attend. I urge my colleagues to join me in addressing this inherent unfairness and work for the passage of my tuition tax credit program as the best way to help offset the double payment endured by those who send their children to Catholic and parochial schools.

In America today, we have 59 million youngsters in elementary and secondary school across the U.S.; about 10 percent of these students are enrolled in private, parochial and rabbinical schools. Those families who are already sending their children to such schools, and others planning to send their children to them, would benefit enormously from my proposal, because they are often struggling to make ends meet.

It is important to note that my education proposal is a tax credit, rather than a voucher, so the total amount of education resources available for all school age children will increase. Under a voucher system, if a school loses enrolled students to a competing school, that